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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicants cancel claims 17-20.

Applicants affirm the election of Group I including claims 1-16 without traverse. Applicants have canceled non-elected claims 17-20. Applicants reserve the right to file a Divisional Application to pursue prosecution of non-elected claims 17-20.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kwan et al. (U.S. 6,872,661). Claims 2-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kwan et al., and further in view of McLellan et al. (U.S. 6,498,099). Applicants respectfully traverse the prior art rejections of claims 1-16.

Claim 1 recites:

**"A process for fabricating a leadless plastic chip carrier, comprising:**  
**partially etching at least a first surface of a leadframe**  
**strip to partially define a die attach pad, a plurality of contact pads**  
**disposed around said die attach pad, and a plurality of bond fingers**  
**intermediate said die attach pad and said contact pads;**  
**laminating a metal strip to the first surface of said**  
**leadframe strip;**  
**selectively etching a second surface of said leadframe**  
**strip such that portions of the leadframe strip are removed to define**  
**a remainder of said die attach pad, said plurality of contact pads,**  
**said plurality of bond fingers and circuitry between ones of said**  
**bond fingers and ones said contact pads;**  
**mounting a semiconductor die to said die attach pad;**  
**wire bonding said semiconductor die to ones of said bond**  
**fingers;**  
**encapsulating said second surface of said leadframe strip,**  
**said semiconductor die and said wire bonds in a molding material;**  
**removing said metal strip from said first surface of said**  
**leadframe strip; and**  
**singulating said leadless plastic chip carrier from a**  
**remainder of said leadframe strip." (emphasis added)**

Claims 14 and 15 recite features and method steps that are similar to the features and method steps recited in claim 1, including the above-emphasized features.

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With the unique combination and arrangement of method steps and features recited in Applicants' claims 1, 14 and 15, Applicants have been able to provide a process for fabricating a leadless plastic chip carrier in which wire bonds extend between the semiconductor die and ones of the bond fingers intermediate the semiconductor die and contact pads. Thus, the wire bond length is less than that of prior art packages, resulting in decreased electrical impedance and increased thermal performance.

In addition, the present claimed invention provides a leadframe strip manufactured at relatively low cost as compared to substrates used in conventional ball grid array packages. Furthermore, because the packages, including the contacts, are isolated prior to singulation, gang testing is possible as multiple packages can be tested prior to singulating each individual package from the leadframe strip (see, for example, paragraph [0011] on page 4 of the originally filed specification).

The Examiner alleged that Kwan et al. teaches "Etching (partially) a first surface of a leadframe strip in order to define a die attach pad, contact pads and power/ground ring resembling the claimed bond fingers intermediate said die attach pads and said contact pads (see claim 1)". Thus, it appears that the Examiner is alleging that the power/ground ring of Kwan et al. corresponds to the bond fingers of the present application. This is clearly incorrect.

First, Applicants' claims 1, 14 and 15 recite the feature of "a plurality of bond fingers intermediate said die attach pad and said contact pads." In contrast, at best, Kwan et al. merely teaches a single power/ground ring, which the Examiner alleged corresponds to a bond finger. Kwan et al. fails to teach or suggest a plurality of bond fingers or a plurality of power/ground rings.

Second, Applicants' claim 1 recites the feature of "laminating a metal strip to the first surface of said leadframe strip." Applicants' claims 14 and 15 recite similar features. There is no teaching or suggestion anywhere in Kwan et al. of laminating a metal strip to the first surface of the leadframe strip. Further, the plating in Kwan et al.

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includes plating layers of metal into pits in the solder mask. There is absolutely no teaching or suggestion of a metal strip laminated to the first surface of the leadframe strip, as recited in Applicants' claim 1, and similarly in Applicants' claims 14 and 15.

Third, Applicants' Claim 1 also recites the feature of "selectively etching a second surface of said leadframe strip such that portions of the leadframe strip are removed to define a remainder of said die attach pad, said plurality of contact pads, said plurality of bond fingers and circuitry between ones of said bond fingers and ones said contact pads". Applicants' claims 14 and 15 recite similar features. This is not taught or suggested anywhere in Kwan et al. More particularly, there is no teaching or suggestion in Kwan et al. of selectively etching a second surface of the leadframe strip such that portions of the leadframe strip are removed to define circuitry between ones of said bond fingers and said contacts as recited in Applicants' claim 1, and similarly in Applicants' claims 14 and 15.

Fourth, Kwan et al. fails to teach or suggest the feature of "removing said metal strip from said first surface of said leadframe strip", as recited in Applicants' claims 1, 14 and 15. In the Examiner's description of the rejection over Kwan et al., the Examiner appears to be alleging that the step of selectively etching, as recited in Applicants' claims 1, 14 and 15, is equivalent to the step of etching taught by Kwan et al. However, in Kwan et al. there is no leadframe strip remaining after etching, and therefore, Kwan et al. cannot possibly teach or suggest the feature of "removing said metal strip from said first surface of said leadframe strip after etching" as recited in Applicants' claims 1, 14 and 15.

Accordingly, Applicants' respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kwan et al.

The Examiner relied upon McLellan et al. to allegedly cure various deficiencies of Kwan et al. However, McLellan et al. fails to teach or suggest the features of "partially etching at least a first surface of a leadframe strip to partially define a die attach pad, a plurality of contact pads disposed around said die attach pad, and a plurality of bond

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fingers intermediate said die attach pad and said contact pads," "laminating a metal strip to the first surface of said leadframe strip" and "selectively etching a second surface of said leadframe strip such that portions of the leadframe strip are removed to define a remainder of said die attach pad, said plurality of contact pads, said plurality of bond fingers and circuitry between ones of said bond fingers and ones said contact pads" and "removing said metal strip from said first surface of said leadframe strip" as recited in Applicants' claims 1, and similarly in Applicants' claims 14 and 15.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kwan et al. in view of McLellan et al.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Kwan et al. and McLellan et al., applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination of features and method steps recited in claims 1, 14 and 15.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 14 and 15 are allowable. Claims 2-13 and 16 depend upon claims 1 and 14, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claims 1 and 14 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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